

AGENDA ITEM #
July 12, 2002

To: Delta Protection Commission

From: Margit Aramburu, Executive Director

Subject: Briefing on CALFED's South Delta Project
(For Commission Information Only)

Department of Water Resources staff will brief the Commission on the status of South Delta Project, and recently proposed modifications to the actions included in the CALFED Record of Decision.

Background:

In 1996, the Bureau of Reclamation and the Department of Water Resources released a Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement entitled "Interim South Delta Program". The purpose of the DEIR/EIS was to: settle pending litigation against the Bureau of Reclamation and the Department of Water Resources and enhance the existing water delivery capability of the State Water Project. The preferred alternatives included five components: construction and operation of a new intake structure at the Clifton Court Forebay; channel dredging along 4.9 miles of Old River just north of Clifton Court Forebay; construction and seasonal operation of a barrier at the head of Old River in Spring and Fall to improve fishery conditions for salmon migrating along the San Joaquin River; construction and operation of three flow control structures at Old River, Middle River and Grant Line Canal, to improve existing water level and circulation patterns for agricultural users in the South Delta; and increased diversions into Clifton Court Forebay up to a maximum of 20,430 acre feet per day on a monthly averaged basis, resulting in the ability to pump an average of 10,300 cfs at Banks Pumping Plan (with additional annual average SWP deliveries of 46,000 acre feet per year under existing demand conditions and 122,000 acre feet per year under future demand conditions, estimated for the year 2020). Commission staff attended hearings on the DEIR/EIS and submitted comments on the draft dated December 4, 1996. [Note: An earlier DEIR/EIS was released in 1990.]

The environmental document was never finalized, and the South Delta Program came under the CALFED umbrella. Delta Protection Commission staff has been participating in meetings on the South Delta project since late 1999. The Commission staff briefed

the Commission on the South Delta "bundle of actions" in November of 1999, and submitted comments on the "bundle" in January of 2000.

The CALFED Record of Decision (August 2000) describes several actions in the South Delta:

- **Increase State Water Project (SWP) pumping from the current limit from March 15 to December 15 to 8,500 cfs, and modify existing pumping criteria from December 15 to March 15 to allow greater use of SWP export capacity. [Such increased pumping is conditions upon avoiding adverse impacts to fishery protection and in-Delta water supply reliability.] Full use of the increase pumping capability will require continued implementation of temporary barriers on an annual basis as well as project-specific actions to protect agricultural diversions and navigation in the South Delta.**
- **Increase SWP pumping to the maximum capability of 10,300 cfs. Includes:**
 - (1) Design and construct new fish screens at the Clifton Court Forebay and Tracy pumping plant facilities to allow the exports to pump at full capacity more regularly, and**
 - (2) Dredge and install operable barriers to ensure water of adequate quantity and quality to agricultural diverters within the South Delta.**
- **Design and construct floodway improvements on the lower San Joaquin River to provide conveyance, flood control, and ecosystem benefits.**
- Reduce agricultural drainage in the Delta, including early implementation of projects on Veale and Byron Tracts... These projects will be completed prior to completion of the installation of permanent barriers in Old River and Middle River and before SWP pumping can increase to full capacity of 10,300 cfs.

Department of Water Resources' South Delta Improvement Program addresses the first three bullets. Mike Ford, Chief of the Delta Branch of Department of Water Resources' Bay-Delta Office, may be contacted at (916) 653-7247 for additional information.

Attachments:
Map of Project Area
Schedule